

**University Consortium Recommends
Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement**

A consortium of Australian universities that undertook the Australian Diploma Supplement Project for the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations has recommended the introduction of an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement from 2009.

This was announced by the Project Directors, Professor Lynn Meek (previously of the University of New England and now Director of L H Martin Institute, University of Melbourne) and Professor Richard James (Director, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne), and the Project Manager, Professor Grant Harman (University of New England).

Professor Meek and Professor James explained that it is envisaged that the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement will be the Australian equivalent of the Diploma Supplement currently being provided to graduates by higher education institutions in some 45 European nations. It will take the form of documentation that will be provided free of charge to all graduates of Australian higher education institutions.

The purpose of the Graduation Statement will be to make qualifications more portable and their value more transparent by providing descriptions of the nature, level, context and status of the studies that were pursued and completed by graduates, as well as setting out information about the higher education system to which the qualification belongs.

Professor Harman commented that introduction of the Graduation Statement is strongly supported by Australian universities and other stakeholders.

He explained, 'Our extensive consultations within the higher education sector and with stakeholders demonstrated both considerable support and enthusiasm about Graduation Statements'.

'Many key people in universities consider that its introduction will assist both domestic and international graduates seeking employment and further study opportunities abroad. It will also assist graduates seeking further study or employment in Australia'.

Professors Meek and James said 'Graduation Statements also have the potential to make Australian awards better understood internationally, thus enhancing the international mobility of Australian graduates and Australia's competitiveness internationally'.

The Consortium that undertook the Diploma Supplement Project was appointed in January 2007 after a competitive bidding process to develop a single agreed template for an Australian Diploma Supplement. The Consortium represented 14 Australian universities and was led by the University of New England, the University of Melbourne and the Australian National University.

The project team members included Dr Jeannet van der Lee, Associate Professor Leo Goedegebuure and Associate Professor Peter Corrigan from the University of New England, and Dr Kerri-Lee Harris from the University of Melbourne.

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